

Wealth and Knowledge

Wealth and knowledge are at one point interchangeable; they are both a source of self-satisfaction and a path to social recognition; they tend also to reinforce one another. While knowledge is a means to gain more wealth, wealth facilitates the acquiring of more knowledge; it enables the wealthy to send their children to the best schools and universities to study and gain knowledge.

In most countries of the world, the industrially advanced ones in particular, wealth has become the primary source for gaining and maintaining social status and thus more important than knowledge; in contrast, due to relative poverty and lack of much wealth in most developing countries, knowledge has become the shortest and surest way to gaining and maintaining social recognition in such countries.

In the less developed and less educated societies in general, wealth tends to undermine the importance of knowledge, giving the wealthy no pressing reasons to spend the time and money to acquire the right education. But without knowledge, wealth would have difficulty growing and accumulating; it may even be unable to maintain itself and survive bad times, causing the hard earned or easily inherited social recognition to become vulnerable to changing times and unfavorable life conditions.

In contrast, knowledge cannot fail regardless of times and life conditions; it is both a form of personal wealth and a means to making and accumulating more wealth. And for a person having wealth and knowledge, social recognition becomes an entitlement, not just a right to be earned.

Regardless of how wealth and knowledge are viewed by society, without the right knowledge, no societal progress can be made, no personal or national wealth could last for long, and no social recognition can endure.

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